



OSAC Country Security Report Slovakia

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This report is intended to supplement the U.S. Department of State Slovakia Travel Advisory and Slovakia Country Information Page.

Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

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OSAC Country Chapter

There is no active OSAC Country Chapter in Slovakia.

Contact [OSAC's Europe team](#) with any questions.

Slovakia Travel Advisory

The current U.S. Department of State [Travel Advisory](#) at the date of this report's publication assesses that travelers should exercise normal precautions in Slovakia.

Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Bratislava as being a **LOW**-threat location for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a crime "C" indicator on the Travel Advisory for Slovakia.

The general crime rate is below the U.S. national average. Slovakia is a small country, and foreigners generally report to the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava feeling safe visiting, as well as living and working, in country. In 2023 and 2024 combined, there were only a total of 117 murders reported in the entire country. Most reports of crime involving foreigners come from Old Town, Bratislava and include crimes of economic opportunity such as petty theft (e.g., purse snatching, cell phone grabbing, pickpocketing), with occasional reports of vehicle break-ins or vandalism. The aggregation of tourists in Old Town leads to an influx of criminal elements. Pickpockets are professional and are most active in the summer and during the holiday season. They prefer locations like shopping centers, markets, public transportation (in

the vicinity of Old Town), areas near major hotels and tourist sites, and overnight trains to Prague and Warsaw.

When dining in restaurants, particularly at locations with outdoor seating in the warmer months, do not hang handbags or suit coats on the backs of chairs. Thieves can and will steal mobile devices, wallets, and other valuables in the absence of caution.

Although not common, automobile theft does occur. Many thieves transport stolen vehicles to neighboring countries for resale. Preferred targets are up-market European and American cars. Theft from cars is more common than theft of cars in Bratislava, based on opportunity (e.g., unlocked doors and open windows). Vandalism to vehicles may also occur, even on well-traveled streets.

Slovakia has experienced an increase in reports of petty theft of low value items from stores and commercial establishments over the past year. Changes to the penal code which reduced penalties for theft of items under a value threshold may be responsible for the increase.

Burglaries and home invasions of occupied residences remain relatively rare in Slovakia, although over the past several years, the country has seen an uptick in burglary attempts at residences and residential parking garages.

Both indigenous and foreign organized crime (OC) groups are well established. These groups engage in legal and illegal businesses. Some crime figures have business interests in Old Town. Power struggles within the OC syndicates do sometimes occur, mostly outside of Old Town; on occasion, these can be violent. OC actors do not specifically target U.S. or other foreign individuals and tend to coexist in the tourist district, so as not to scare away tourist spending. OC activities include trafficking in narcotics, persons, cigarettes, and weapons. These groups are also involved in auto theft, financial fraud, gambling, prostitution, public corruption, protection rackets, and cybercrime. Though uncommon, auto theft strongly correlates to OC. Slovakia is actively fighting the trafficking of illicit goods/people and illegal migration as part of its role in protecting the European Union (EU) external border with Ukraine. Slovakia has also tightened regulations regarding the sale and transfer of “demilitarized” weapons.

While bars and restaurants throughout Slovakia are generally considered safe, criminals have in the past targeted tourists at casinos, nightclubs, and strip clubs with OC ties. Such establishments continue to present dangers to foreign customers who are faced with inflated bills and threats if they refuse to pay. There have also been reports of OC elements spiking drinks with disabling drugs at these establishments, taking the impaired victims to ATMs and coercing them to withdraw funds until they empty their accounts or the bank blocks the use of the card.

Train stations, to include Hlavná Stanica and Petržalka in the Bratislava area, continue to attract migrants, street people, and criminal elements who target tourists and unsuspecting victims. While not a frequent occurrence, non-violent purse snatchings do occur and often target newly

arrived travelers unfamiliar with the local environment. Purse-snatchers typically work in crowded areas and in teams, allowing them to cut straps of purses and run away into a crowd.

Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Kidnapping “K” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Slovakia.

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Bratislava as being a **LOW**-threat location for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Terrorism “T” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Slovakia.

There are no known foreign terrorist organizations present and operating in Slovakia. However, there are racially and ethnically motivated extremist groups and individuals and there have been incidents of homegrown lone actors planning terrorist incidents in the country. In response, the Slovak government normally posts additional police officers at government buildings, diplomatic missions, and public venues during periods of heightened concern or in response to regional events.

Although there are no known, specific threats to U.S. interests in Bratislava, U.S. nationals and U.S. interests abroad remain at risk from ISIS, al-Qa’ida, their affiliated organizations, and other terrorist groups or homegrown actors. These individuals do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. The threat from international terrorism remains high in the European Union and is diversifying in scope and impact. Slovakia’s porous borders and membership in the Schengen zone potentially allows bad actors to transit into Slovakia from Ukraine Hungary, and other Western European countries.

Recent Incidents:

- In October 2022, there was an attack against a bar frequented by the LGB community in Bratislava, resulting in the deaths of two patrons and injury of a waitress.
- Throughout 2024, Slovakia received more than 1,000 bomb threats to schools, banks, stores, and other locations from a still unidentified sender. Bomb threats to these institutions, as well as courts and government offices, occur regularly in Slovakia.
- In July 2024, several individuals were detained following police identification of a plot to attack participants in a Bratislava LGB event.

- In January 2025, police detained a man in Kosice on terrorism charges after the individual, suspected of producing explosive devices, threatened committing violent acts.

Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Bratislava as being a **LOW**-threat location for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Civil Unrest “U” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Slovakia. Civil unrest anywhere can develop quickly without prior notice, often interrupting logistics and services. While protest activity in Slovakia generally occurs without violence, it is prudent to avoid any demonstration activity, as even those planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

Elections/Political Stability

Slovakia is considered a stable democracy, and presidential elections occurred in March and April 2024 without significant security issues.

In May 2024, there was an assassination attempt against Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico. He survived the attack after being shot point blank several times with a pistol. The suspect is now facing terror charges for the incident.

Political and societal polarization runs high in Slovakia, and opposition parties and civil society groups regularly organize anti-government protests that often attract tens of thousands of protestors across the country. On January 23-24, 2025, more than 100,000 people took to the streets across Slovakia to peacefully protest Prime Minister Fico’s government.

Protests & Demonstrations

Public demonstrations are common, though typically peaceful and without security issues. Over the past year, numerous large, politically motivated gatherings have occurred, some with estimated crowd sizes exceeding 60,000 people. Most public gatherings occur in the area around SNP and Freedom Square in downtown Bratislava. In Slovakia, the local government must pre-approve demonstrations. The police have historically been able to control crowds and separate any counterdemonstrators to avoid confrontation.

Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

Slovakia is a split country ideologically, and some local elements tend to be anti-NATO and anti-U.S. based upon local polling data. However, it is rare for foreigners from NATO partner states and the U.S. to directly experience the impact of such sentiment. Anti-U.S. and anti-Western individuals and groups have periodically held demonstrations in Bratislava's Old Town, often in the area near the U.S. Embassy on Hviezdoslavovo námestie, and other major cities. However, these protests have been small, peaceful, and usually feature sufficient police presence to maintain order.

Law Enforcement

The national police force has sole responsibility for internal and border security and reports to the Slovak Ministry of Interior (MOI). Throughout 2024, the government overhauled institutions responsible for investigating and prosecuting corruption and other serious crimes. In September 2024, the government disbanded the National Crime Agency (NAKA), a specialized police department that investigated corruption and other serious crimes, replacing it with three new separate police units. The government also abolished in March 2024 the Special Prosecutor's Office (SPO) responsible for prosecuting corruption, organized crime, terrorism, and other serious crimes, transferring its agenda and cases to the Prosecutor General's Office as well as regional prosecution branches. As a result of these changes, a number of senior investigators and prosecutors retired or were transferred to regional units and cases involving lesser crimes. The Slovak Border and Foreign Police, under the authority of MOI, is responsible for external security, including border control and preventing illegal migration, human smuggling, and trafficking in persons, and conducts investigations of related criminal activities; it also exercises limited powers in asylum proceedings. Civilian authorities maintain effective control over security forces.

Although very capable, Slovak police and security services are hampered by a shortage of personnel, low wages, long hours, and limited training and equipment which collectively inhibits proactive policing and patrols. Police infrequently patrol residential neighborhoods but will focus on areas that have experienced an increase in criminal activity. The police and security services have historically suffered from significant corruption, especially at high levels, and numerous officials of each service have faced corruption charges, especially following changes in political parties and administrations.

Police Response

While competent and professional, police forces may suffer from a lack of personnel and fiscal resources, as well as equipment. Police responsiveness to criminal incidents depends on the type and severity of the crime involved and, to an extent, the social status of the complainant. Response to serious and/or violent situations is generally good. Responding to non-life-threatening situations can take upwards of an hour or more. Additionally, there are some concerns/indications that response can be somewhat discriminatory if the victim is a minority

or does not speak Slovak. Insufficient funding, resources, and training contribute to these challenges.

Slovak police forces have seen an increase in retirements over the past year, resulting in an increasing shortage of officers to respond to incidents. The current administration has pledged to increase wages and boost hiring but may be restricted by a tightening budget environment. In fall 2024, there was also a large reshuffle of the existing police structure and personnel, with many experienced officers and investigators being sent to new positions outside of Bratislava or forced into retirement due to politics, especially at the leadership level.

Foreigners who have been the victim of crime may find their interactions with the Slovak police to be somewhat frustrating due to the language barrier, as many police officers do not speak English.

The police emergency lines in Slovakia are **112** and **158** (Non-Emergency: **09610 11111**). These 24-hour emergency numbers are staffed with operators with English-language capabilities per EU regulation.

Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Slovakia, review the local laws and circumstances on the Department of State's Country Information Page.

- [Women Travelers](#)
- [LGB Travelers](#)
- [Travelers with Disabilities](#)
- [Student Travelers](#)
- [Faith-Based Travelers](#)

Rule of Law, Arbitrary Detention, Official Harassment, Corruption, & Transparency

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Risk of Wrongful Detention “D” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Slovakia.

Legislative changes the government adopted following the 2023 parliamentary elections had an impact on the rule of law, the fight against corruption, and transparency. In February 2024, Parliament passed wide-ranging amendments to the criminal code and dissolved the Special Prosecutor's Office through a fast-track legislative procedure raising concerns about the process and content of the legislative changes. Some of these included shortening of the statutes of limitations for corruption crimes and lowering of related penalties. In July 2024, the Constitutional Court found the changes in line with the constitution, except for minor provisions, and the parliament has since then adopted further changes to address the European Commission concerns. The government disbanded the National Crime Agency (NAKA), a specialized police department that investigated corruption and other serious crimes, replacing

it with three new separate police units: the Bureau for Combating Organized Crime, the National Anti-Drug Unit, and the National Contact Point for Counterterrorism.

Changes in criminal law and law enforcement raises concern about the ability of Slovak authorities to effectively prosecute high-level corruption. Previous efforts to centralize expert knowledge in investigating and prosecuting corruption were largely dismantled due to the legislative and institutional changes. The excessive use of fast-track legislative procedures and lack of public consultations significantly impacted institutional trust and continue to raise concerns about rule of law safeguards in Slovakia.

Cybersecurity

While not as endemic as in neighboring countries, rare cases of credit card, internet, and ATM fraud have occurred within the past few years. Individuals should use providers and services that are credible and well-known to decrease the risk of becoming a victim.

Overall, cybercrime is a concern and the country as a whole lacks the necessary measures to prevent, defend against, and respond to cyber security threats. There are several instances of known intrusions into government networks by state and non-state actors, including the cyberattack in January 2025 which is considered the largest such cyber-attack in the history of Slovakia which targeted the government offices which maintain public records.

Individuals in Slovakia should protect computer systems and passwords using best practices and up-to-date antivirus software.

There is no expectation of privacy on electronic devices or data. Wi-Fi networks are generally considered to be vulnerable to monitoring by security services and others. Security services and criminals can insert malicious software into your device through any connection they control or remotely if your device is enabled for wireless.

Import/Export Restrictions

Slovak customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning temporary import or export of firearms, antiquities, medications, and business equipment.

Medical prescriptions issued in the U.S. are not valid in Slovakia. A traveler needing a prescription must request one from a local doctor. Medicine brought into Slovakia for personal use may be subject to comparison against the Ministry of Health list of those authorized for use in Slovakia.

There are no restrictions on the import and use of satellite phones.

A country-specific listing of items/goods prohibited from being exported to the country or that are otherwise restricted is available from the U.S. International Trade Agency [website](#).

Additional resources and reports can be found in the [OSAC Traveler Toolkit](#).